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01/10/2012 Minutes

Park and Recreation Commission

Minutes

Tuesday, January 10, 2012

Approved

The Park and Recreation Commission came to order at 7:00 PM on the first floor of the Arlington Senior Center on Tuesday, January 10, 2012.

Members in attendance included: Leslie Mayer, Jim Robillard, Jen Rothenberg and Don Vitters. Also in attendance was Director of Recreation Joseph Connelly.

Members of the public included: Jim Carney from the Arlington Hockey Club.

Approval of Minutes

November 8, 2011 Minutes - On Page 2, Mr. Vitters stated that he was not concerned with the scoreboard height; he was just requesting more details.

December 13, 2011 Minutes – On Page 2, Article 36, first paragraph, Ms. Rothenberg stated that she was not concerned about the additional warrant articles.

Mr. Vitters motioned to approve Minutes of November 8, 2011 and December 13, 2011 as amended. Motion was seconded by Mr. Robillard. All in favor 3-0 with Ms. Rothenberg abstaining from the November minutes vote.

Open Forum – Public Comments

No Public Comments.

2012-2013 Ed Burns Arena Ice Rate Proposal

Mr. Connelly sent the 2012-2013 Ice Rate Proposal to all rink users. Mr. Connelly did hear from Dan Shine who supports the rate proposal.

Mr. Connelly stated that the increase in rates will help pay for much needed improvements to the facility. Mr. Connelly has requested \$280,000 from the Capital Planning Committee in FY2013, which will be bonded and needs to be paid through rink revenues.

The following improvements are necessary in order to provide and maintain the ice surface and the quality of the conditions of the rink. A failure in any of these could result in the rink being inoperable – these are not “nice to have” items:

- Replace the gas zamboni with an electric zamboni and do some electrical updates in the zamboni room; keeping the gas

zamboni as a back-up (Estimated cost, \$130,000).

- Replace the Water Cooler Tower that is rusting from the inside out (Estimated cost, \$75,000).
- Install additional dehumidification units in rink – duct work is already in place (Estimated cost, \$75,000).

Mr. Carney understands that these are necessary improvements, but the hockey club is concerned about the affordability of the program to families. However, he stated that he did call around to local rinks and these proposed ice rates are the highest. Ms. Mayer would like to see the rates broken down into the portion that supports operational costs versus capital improvement costs so that everyone has a better understanding of what's in the rates. It is possible that the local rinks that Mr. Carney spoke with have not done capital improvements recently, which may be why their rates are lower. Mr. Carney talked about trying to be creative in getting money. There was discussion about private fundraising. A possibility would be working with the Recreation Department to fundraise together.

The Commission approved the rate increase 4-0 with the understanding that the user groups in collaboration with the Rec. Dept. should look into fundraising to reduce the amount that families pay directly toward the rates for capital improvements.

Capital Improvement Project Update

Wellington Tennis Courts – Mr. Connelly tested the lights. They work, look great and are impressive.

North Union Basketball Court – Bid due at the end of the month.

Thorndike Field OLRA Update – The fence posts are in. The subsurface is complete. Contractor hit concrete at the far edge toward Alewife. Removal will cost more money. Sacca is moving forward with the project. Work will be completed in spring.

2013 Capital Request Review – No report.

Reservoir Boat Ramp – No report.

Buck Field Renovation – The field looks fantastic. The benches will be in this week. The stonework looks good. Sod looks great. French Construction will bring infield up to sod level.

Poets Corner Master Plan – Mr. Connelly would like to take the feasibility money in conjunction with soccer to do a master plan. Poets Corner has a lot of land – big potential. Soccer is in need of an 11x11 field. Ms. Mayer asked about where planning money for Florence would come from, since the Commission had previously agreed that the layout and needs of this property were in question. She feels that since Florence has been prioritized in the Capital Plan then it should be studied first and if there is additional funding then focus on Poets.

Off Leash Dog Review – Mr. Connelly shared a complaint regarding a loose dog. The DPW is working on getting the signage installed. They will be installed on fencing or metal posts.

Special Requests

Mr. Connelly received a request to flood the spray park at Thompson and let it freeze for skating. Mr. Connelly feels this would do no harm. The community will have to rally to get it done. They would probably get 7-14 quality days on it – probably not worth it. Mr. Connelly will talk with Julianna Rice regarding liability and signage if it does move forward. Ms. Mayer will provide input on behalf of the Commission to any signage determined to be necessary.

Mr. Robillard motioned to approve pending town counsel's approval and signage. Ms. Rothenberg seconded the motion.